

Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge

Entrance Fee Program

Summary

What:	Entrance Fees may be charged for a specific facility or to enter a National Park, National Wildlife Refuge or other federal land and most of the revenue generated from the program stays at the site and used to support visitor programs and facilities.
Where:	The proposed new fee will be charged at Black Point Wildlife Drive and at three improved refuge boat ramps (Bairs Cove, Beacon 42, and Bio Lab).
When:	We plan to collect the new fees beginning July 1, 2011.
Why:	Currently the revenue received in the annual Refuge budget is not adequate to maintain or improve facilities, keep pace with the visitor needs, or to grow visitor programs. The refuge is currently participating in the Fee Program and charges fees for Quota Waterfowl Hunt Permits, Guided Sports Fishing, Commercial Tours, and Guided Tours offered by staff and volunteers from the Visitor Center. The proposed new fees, will generate addition revenue to enhance visitor programs, facilities and services.
Cost	Daily \$5.00. Annual \$15.00, Walking & Bicycle \$1.00
General Rules	Passes are non-transferable, non-replaceable if lost or stolen unless identification is provided to validate ownership and a portion of the pass is identifiable, void if altered, Annual Pass must be signed by pass holder to be valid, may be signed by 2 individuals, must punch out day of week for Daily Pass or month of the year for Annual pass, do not provide discount at Friends Group bookstore.
Daily Pass:	The Daily Pass is good for all legally permitted motorized vehicles including motorcycles. The pass is good for all occupants of the vehicle for one day, (the purchase date). The Daily Pass for Black Point Wildlife Drive and boat launching from the three boat ramp sites are interchangeable (can be used at any refuge fee location(s)). The fee for walking or bicycling admits one individual. The Daily Pass may be purchased at the entrance to Black Point Wildlife Drive or any of the boat ramps with cash or check from a self-serve fee station, or from the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center with cash, check or credit card.
Annual Pass	The Annual Pass will be honored at the wildlife drive or boat ramps and covers all modes of transportation (motor vehicles, bicycles, walking). The Annual Pass is good for one calendar year from the month purchased. For Example, if the pass is purchased on July 1, 2011, it would be good through July 31, 2012. When purchased, the purchase month will be punched out. The pass is not valid until it is signed, so the purchaser must sign the pass with first and last name in the presences of the seller at the point of sale. Any two individuals may sign the pass regardless of their relationship to one another. The pass belongs to the signer/s only and one of the signers must be present for the

pass to be used. The pass admits the pass holder/s and any accompanying passenger in a private non-commercial vehicle. The Annual Pass may be purchased from the Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Visitor Center in person, by mail, or online with a credit card. Passes sold over the internet will be punched with an expiration date at the time of sale. The Annual Pass may be purchased as a gift, but must be punched with an expiration date at the time of sale and must be signed to be valid.

**Other Valid
Passes**

The three America the Beautiful Interagency Passes. (Annual, Senior, and Access Pass) may be used in place of the Daily or Annual Pass. Volunteers that accumulate 500 hours of work in a year may be issued an Interagency Volunteer Pass. All Interagency Passes are recognized at most National Parks, National Forest, and National Wildlife Refuges. In addition, the Federal Duck Stamp (good from July 1 – June 30 annually), may also be substituted for any refuge pass. National Public Lands Day and Veterans Day (November 11) are “Fee Free” days.

Individuals 16 years of age and under are admitted free. Fees will not be charged for a bona fide, non commercial educational program by schools or for persons engaged in a Commercial Use such as Fishing Guides, Commercial Harvesters, Kayaking/Canoe Outfitters, or Bus Tours that have a current Commercial Use Authorization Permit.

Visitors may apply the cost of a valid Daily Pass to upgrade to an Annual Refuge Pass, Canaveral National Seashore Pass, or any of the America the Beautiful Interagency Passes.

**Refuge &
Seashore To
Honor Passes**

Canaveral National Seashore and Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge operate separate fee programs but the two agencies have agreed to honor each others passes. Canaveral National Seashore is changing the cost of the Daily Pass to match the price of the Refuge Daily Pass, (from \$3.00 per person to \$5.00 per vehicle) and the pass will cover all occupants of the vehicle. However, because of the difference in price of the Annual Pass, Canaveral National Seashore will apply the \$15 purchase price of the Refuge Annual Pass or Federal Duck Stamp toward the price of the \$35 Annual Pass.

**Proof of
Payment**

The **Daily Pass** works on an honor system, where the visitor records the purchase date, vehicle license number, and places the fee (cash or check) in an envelope and deposits the sealed envelope in a pipe safe. The visitor detaches and retains the stub punches out the day of the week the pass was purchased, and hangs the stub (hang tag) from the rear view mirror of the vehicle. The envelope and the stub bear the same number and may be used to verify payment. The Daily Pass is not valid unless the day of the week is punched out.

A Hang Tag with the purchase month punched out will be provided with the purchase of the **Annual Pass** and will be displayed from the rear view mirror of the vehicle when in a Fee Area.

Motorcycles

Motorcycles will be treated as motor vehicles. However, since two people may sign one Annual Pass and is likely that two individuals may travel together on separate motorcycles, they shall be admitted on separate motorcycles with one pass. Both persons who sign a single Annual Pass will be issued a decal that may be displayed

instead of a hangtag which could easily be stolen. Decals will not be issued for Daily Passes at this time.

Projects Fee funds have a strong tie to the Visitor and eighty percent (80%) of the revenue generated from the fee program will stay at the refuge to support visitors programs. The remaining 20% will be used by other refuges to support visitor services on refuges that do not have fee programs. After collection cost is subtracted, all the fee revenue will be used to support the following programs: Visitor Services, Visitor Information, Interpretation, Environmental Education, Photography, Hunting, Fishing, and Law Enforcement. The fee revenue of the Refuge and Seashore will not be mingled.

Penalties Failure to produce proof of payment is a Class A or B misdemeanor and the fine may not exceed \$100.